

**Reform
Support
Network**

**ADDRESSING COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGES:
STRATEGIES TO EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE WITH
EDUCATORS ABOUT EVALUATION**

QUALITY EVALUATION ROLLOUT WORK GROUP
BILTMORE HOTEL, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

DECEMBER 12, 2012

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QUALITY EVALUATION ROLLOUT WORK GROUP

OBJECTIVES

- Enable States to learn from one another as they roll out their evaluation systems
- Build relationships between States so they can continually support one another between meetings
- Develop tools and resources to support the work of the early implementation States and inform the work of States poised to roll out their evaluation systems in future years
- Document the experience and lessons learned of participating States



TODAY'S OBJECTIVES

States will be able to:

- Work with their peers and national experts to develop strategies for communications challenges.
- Communicate more effectively about components of their evaluation systems with their educators.
- Build lasting connections with their peers from other States and establish a cross-state support network.



TODAY'S AGENDA

8:30-9 a.m.	Informal networking
9-9:30 a.m.	Welcome and introductions
9:30-10:45 a.m.	How to discuss value-added data
10:45-11 a.m.	Break
11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.	Cross-State problem solving (Problem of Practice)
1:30-1:40 p.m.	Break
1:40-1:50	Problem of Practice Debrief
1:50-3:05 p.m.	Getting input and feedback from teachers
3:05-3:20 p.m.	Update on Data Analytics Subcommittee
3:20-3:30 p.m.	Next steps and close



INTRODUCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

In 1-2 minutes, tell us:

- Your name
- Your State
- Your position
- One thing you hope to take away from today's convening



HOW TO DISCUSS VALUE-ADDED DATA

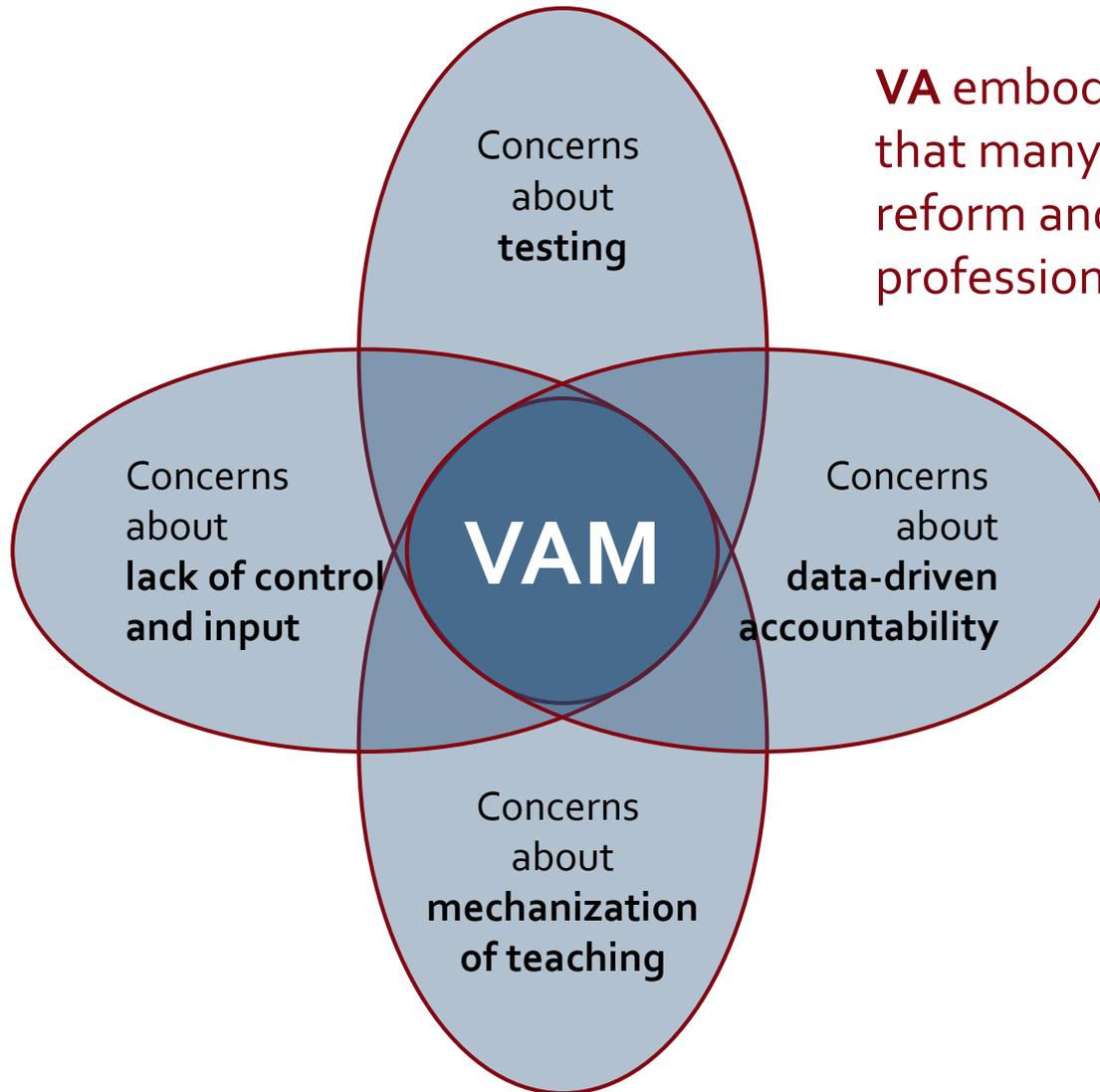
Presenters:

Adam Kernan-Schloss, KSA-Plus Communications

David Keeling, TNTP



WHY IS VALUE-ADDED (VA) SUCH A HOT-BUTTON ISSUE IN THE FIRST PLACE?



VA embodies the fears and anxieties that many teachers have about reform and the future of their profession.

Exacerbating Factors:

- Scary math
- High stakes
- Little perceived value
- Misinformation



PROMISING PRACTICES IN VALUE-ADDED MODEL (VAM) COMMUNICATIONS



Houston Independent School District
Effective Teachers Initiative



New York City Department of Education
Teacher Effectiveness Program



Indiana Department of Education
RISE Evaluation and Development System



Rhode Island Department of Education
Teacher Evaluation and Support System



LESSONS LEARNED ON VAM

Hold realistic expectations

The goal is not to make teachers diehard fans of VA, but to ensure they understand the basics and accept VA as one of multiple measures.

Emphasize function within the larger evaluation system

Emphasize that VA is just one part of the puzzle. Focus on its unique role as an objective measure of student learning that can balance more subjective measures, like principal observations.

Acknowledge shortcomings

Be honest about the limitations of value-added and have a plan for addressing them. Glossing over challenges will only increase skepticism.

Be prepared for misinformation

Concerns often stem from misinformation about what VA is and how it will be used. Know the myths and have succinct responses ready.

Stay out of the weeds

Offer a detailed explanation for those who are interested, but stay focused on the big picture.

Plan for glitches

Implementation will expose problems. Create and communicate an easy way for teachers to check for and report issues or errors.

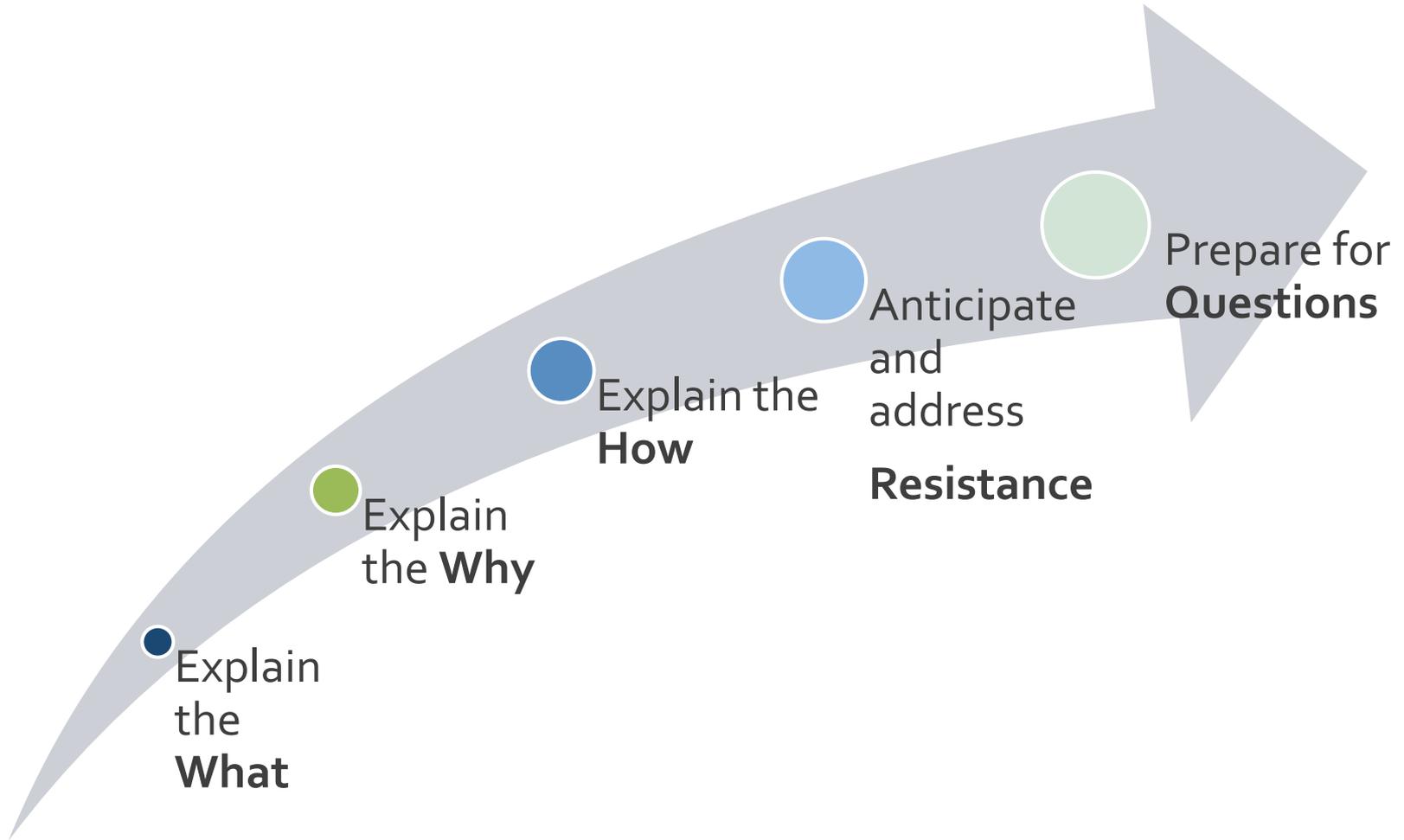


CRITICAL THEMES

Theme	Message
We're all here to help students learn.	We can't truly evaluate a teacher's performance without considering how much his or her students are learning.
Of the tools we can use to measure teacher impact on student learning, VA is the most sophisticated.	It allows us to account for factors outside of a teacher's control, like student poverty level or class size, and more reliably predicts future performance than any other measure (e.g., scores on licensing tests).
VA isn't perfect but it doesn't have to be to be useful.	A VA score is like a teacher's batting average; it doesn't tell the whole story and may fluctuate from year to year, but it's still a critical measure of success.
Teaching is complex and can't possibly be captured in a single measure.	That's why VA results are always combined with other measures, like classroom observations, that help paint a more complete picture. VA is never the sole measure.
Students of teachers with high VA ratings don't just do well on tests.	Research shows students of top-rated teachers are less likely to become teenage parents and more likely to graduate college, earn a higher salary, live in better neighborhoods, and save more for retirement.



FIVE LAYERS TO QUALITY DISCUSSION





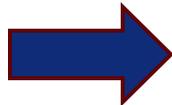
1. EXPLAIN THE WHAT

What It Is



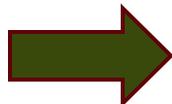
VA analysis uses standardized test scores to **determine a teacher's impact** on student growth per year.

What It Isn't



Unlike other measures, it **considers each student's starting point** based on background and previous performance.

What It Gives Us



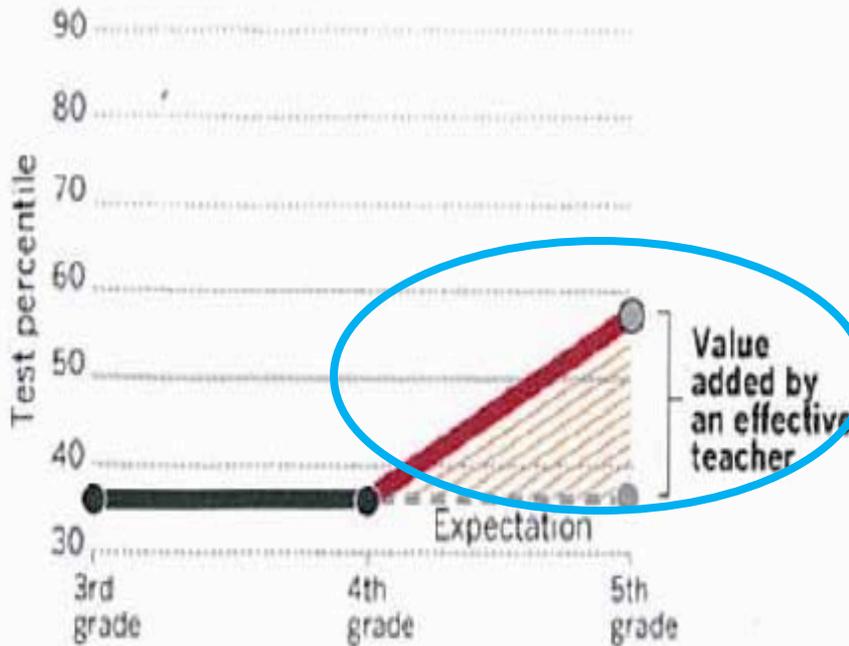
It allows us to better **understand the impact each teacher had** on their students' performance.



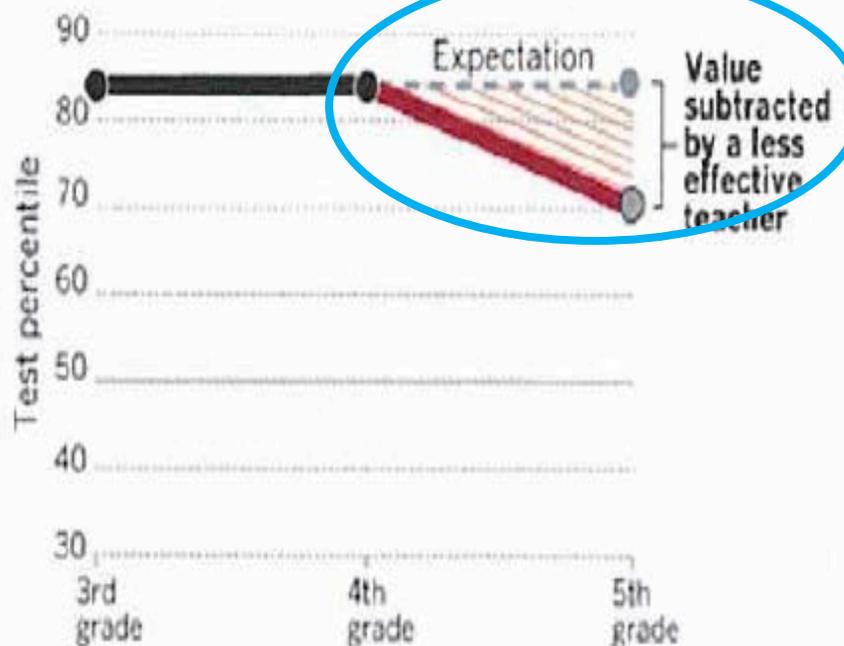
1. EXPLAIN THE WHAT

Show How It Works:

Student 1: Results exceed expectation



Student 2: Results fall short of expectation



Sources: California Standards Tests. Los Angeles Unified School District. Times reporting

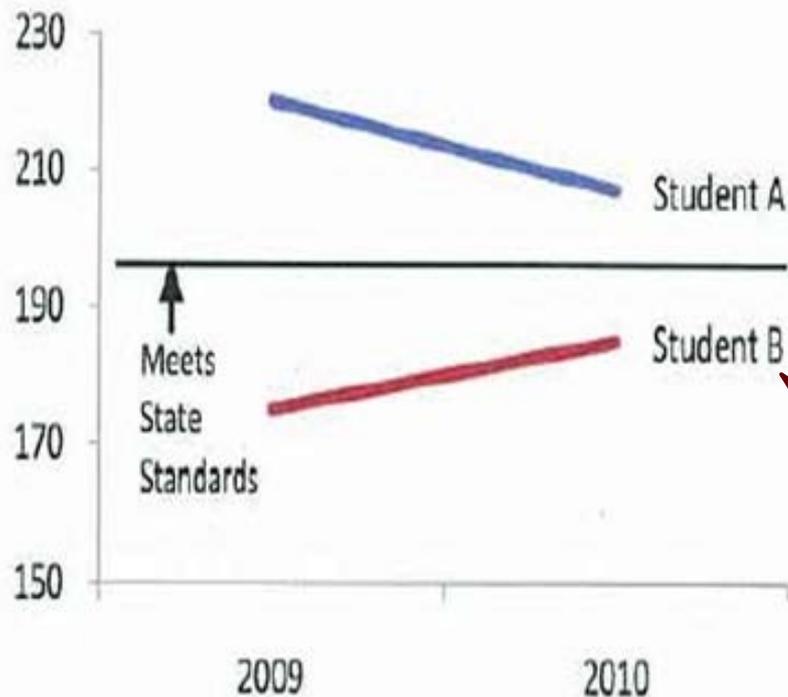
Los Angeles Times

Source: The Los Angeles Times



1. EXPLAIN THE WHAT

How It Captures Improvement, not Just Scores:



While Student A meets State standards, his VA score reveals *decreasing* performance.

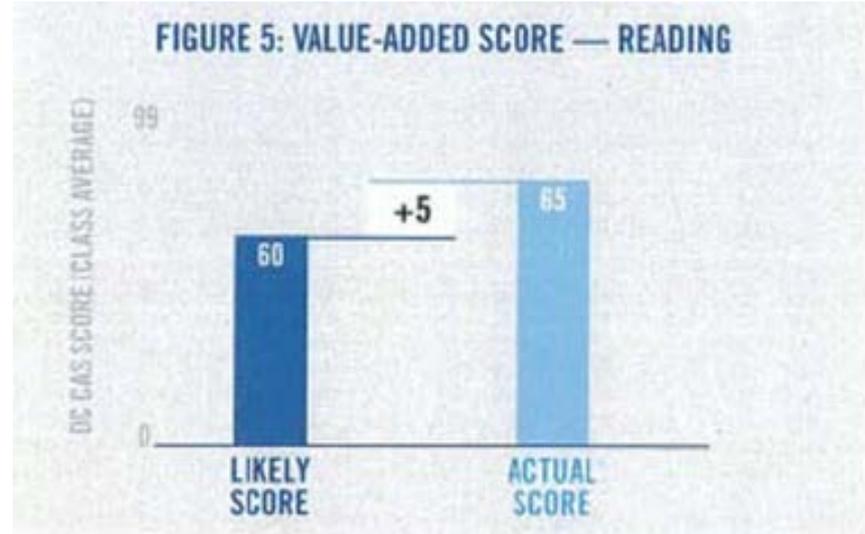
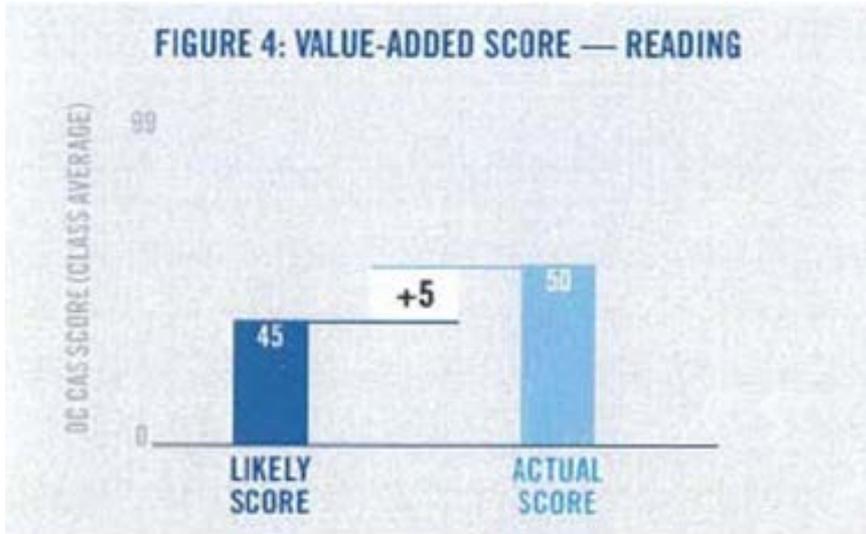
Conversely, Student B does not meet State standards, but her VA score reveals *improved* performance.

Source: Chicago Public Schools



1. EXPLAIN THE WHAT

How It Works for Students with Different Starting Points:



Source: DC Public Schools



ATTAINMENT MODEL

WHICH GARDENER HAS THE TALLEST TREE?

Gardener A



61 in.



72

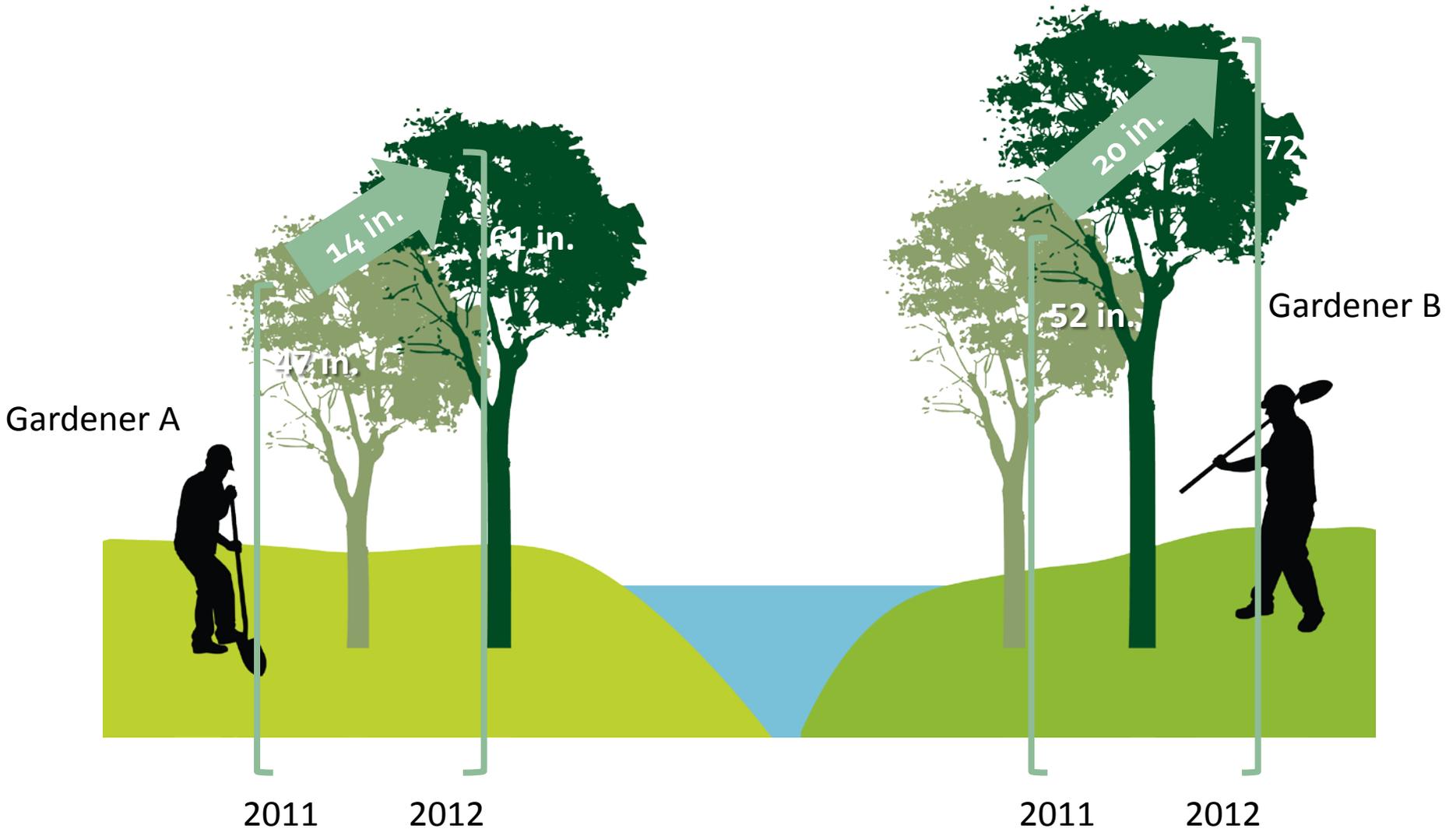
Gardener B





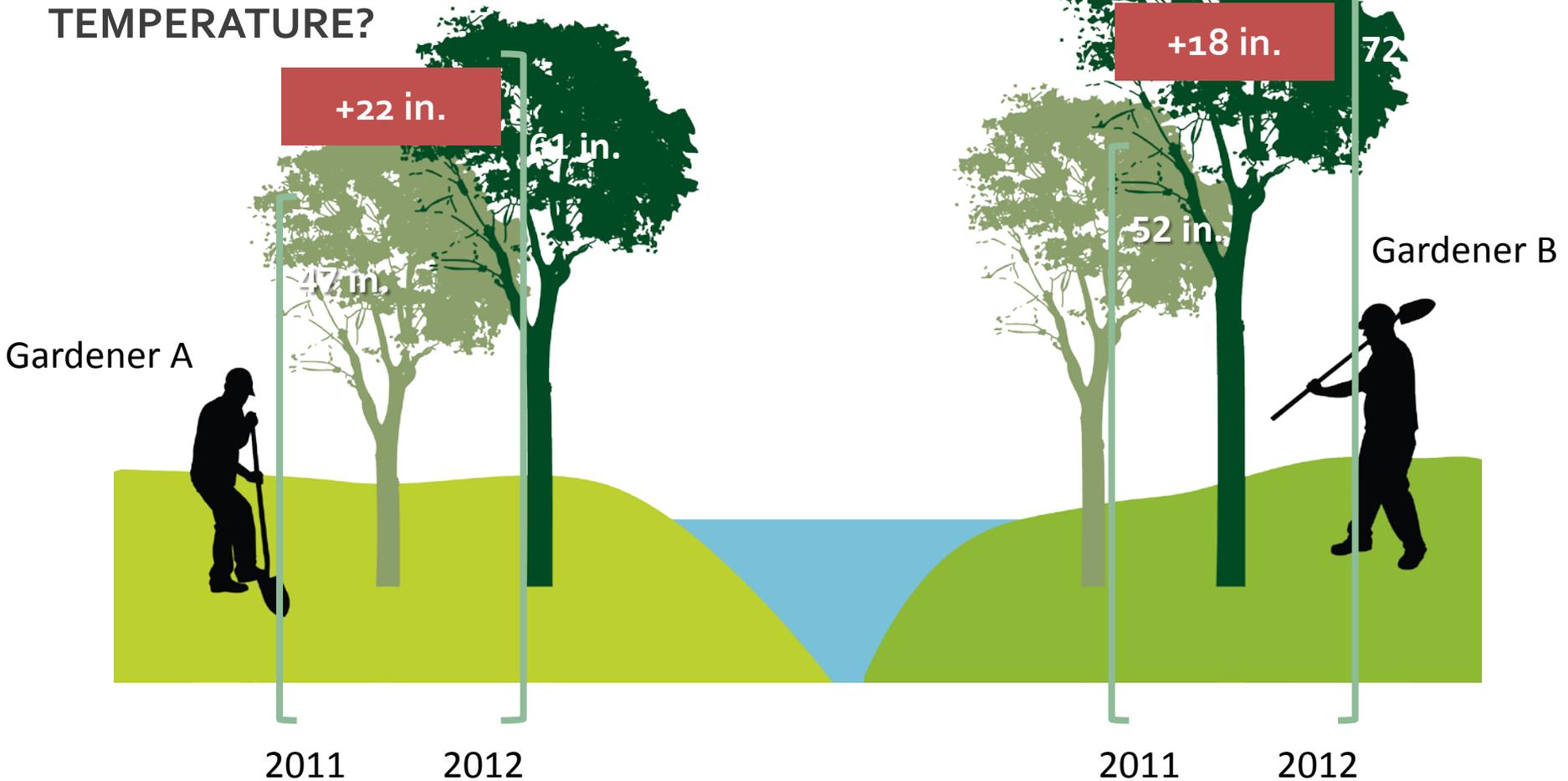
GAIN MODEL

WHICH GARDENER'S TREE GREW THE MOST IN THE PAST YEAR?





WHICH GARDENER'S TREE GREW THE MOST IN THE PAST YEAR WHEN ACCOUNTING FOR CONDITIONS SUCH AS RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURE?





2. EXPLAIN THE WHY

As TNTP says:

A teacher's value-added score is comparable to many widely-accepted measures of performance in other professions. In order, from most stable to least:

Baseball Pitchers: Earned run averages, by year

Insurance Salespeople: Value of policies sold, by month

Baseball Hitters: Batting average, by year

Elementary Teachers: Value-added student growth, by year

Middle School Teachers: Value-added student growth, by year

University Faculty: Student ratings, by semester

Securities Analysts: Commissions, by quarter

Source: McCaffrey and Sass, Florida State University and The RAND Corporation, 2009



2. EXPLAIN THE WHY

A performance measure needs to be good, not perfect. Many useful correlations are consistent with VA scores, including:

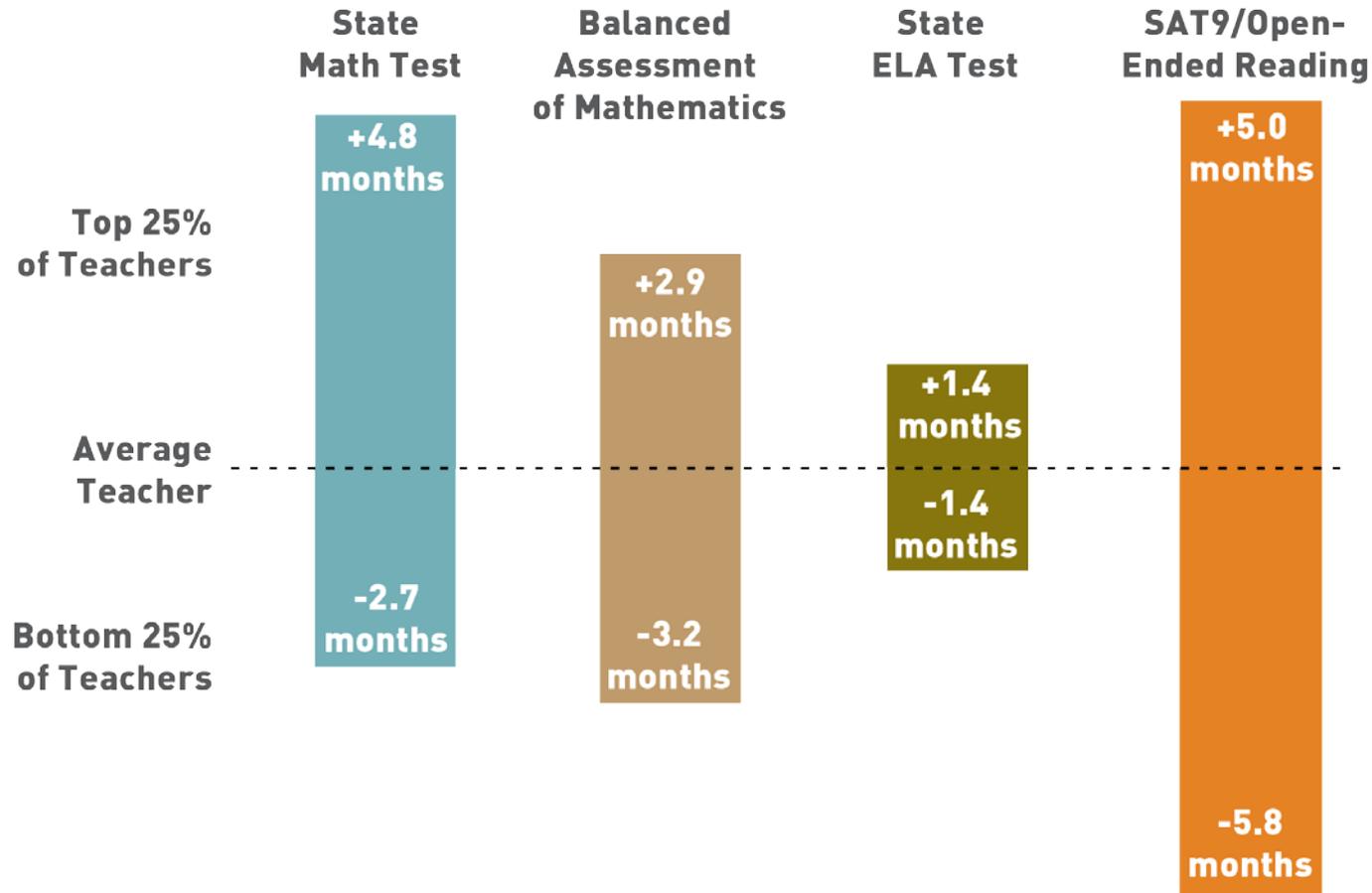
- SAT/ACT correlations with college success
- Mortality rates for hospitals and surgeons
- Volume of home sales for realtors
- Returns on investment funds
- Output of sewing machine operators
- Productivity of utilities' field-service workers

Source: Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings



2. EXPLAIN THE WHY

Students with Most Effective Teachers Learn More in a School Year



Source: *Learning about Teaching*, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010



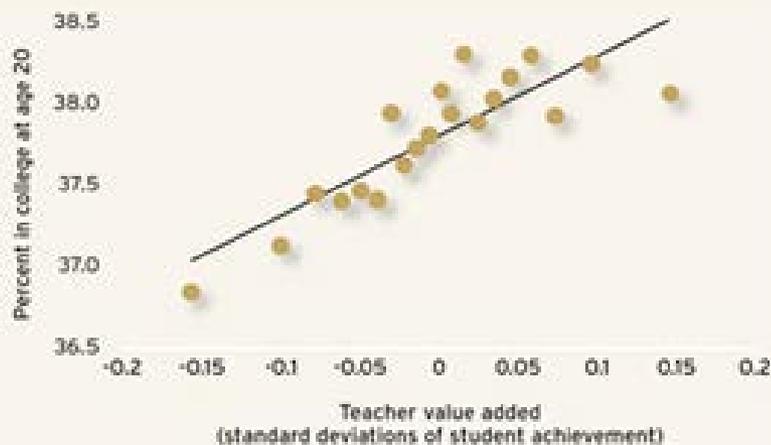
2. EXPLAIN THE WHY

The impact teachers have on college attendance and earnings:

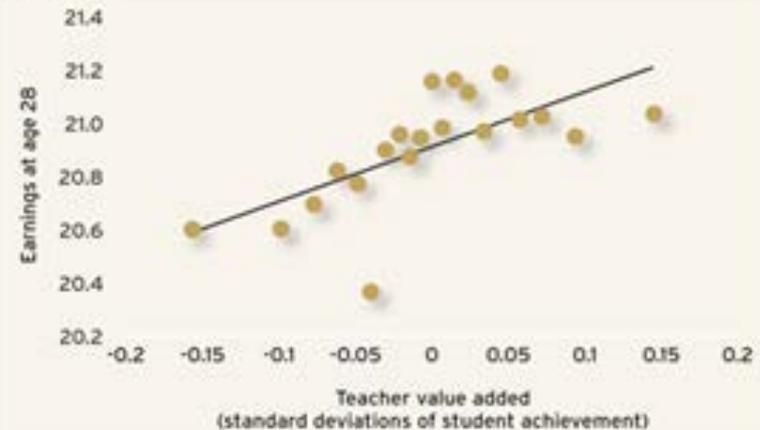
Better Teachers, Better Outcomes (Figure 2)

Students of higher-VA teachers are more likely to be enrolled in college at age 20 and earn more at age 28.

(Figure 2a)



(Figure 2b)



Note: Each data point represents the average outcome value for students taught by teachers within 20 equally sized (5 percentile-point) intervals, after adjusting for the standard set of control variables included in our value-added model. Teacher value added is estimated using data from classes taught by the same teacher in different years. An increase in teacher value added of 1 standard deviation corresponds to increases in student math and English scores of 12 and 8 percent of a standard deviation, respectively.

SOURCE: Authors' calculations

Source: By Raj Chetty, John N. Friedman and Jonah E. Rockoff



3. EXPLAIN THE HOW

Six key steps:

1. Select a measure of student achievement
2. Collect individual achievement scores
3. Determine individual growth
4. Select the external factors
5. Examine the effect of various external factors
6. Calculate individual student growth relative to their comparison group



3. EXPLAIN THE HOW

For example:

STEP 3

DETERMINING INDIVIDUAL GROWTH

To determine growth, how much a student has learned between two points in time, a student's score is compared against his/her expected score. The expected growth is calculated using historical performance data from similar groups of students. Some districts choose to compare students against their own prior performance as a way of controlling for the effects of background demographics and other external factors that could affect student achievement.

As shown, all of Ms. K's students experienced positive growth relative to their expected scores.

Growth on State Assessment

Student	Ms. K's students (Actual)	Expected scores	Growth
A	80	75	+5
B	58	28	+30
C	85	80	+5
D	80	70	+10

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4. ANTICIPATE AND PREPARE FOR RESISTANCE



Myths & Facts about Value-Added Analysis

November 2011

MYTHS	FACTS
“Value-added isn’t fair to teachers who work in high-need schools, where students tend to lag far behind academically.”	Value-added controls for students’ past academic performance and demographic factors. ¹ It considers the progress students make over the course of the year instead of a single score on a single day, and it accounts for factors like a student’s poverty level or class size. That means teachers get the credit they deserve for helping all their students improve—even those who start the year far behind grade level—and aren’t penalized for the effects of factors beyond their control.
“Value-added scores are too volatile from year-to-year to be trusted.”	Value-added scores are about as stable as batting averages in baseball and other widely-accepted performance measures. ² It’s true that a teacher’s value-added score could change from year to year. Teachers aren’t equally effective with every class, and any measure has some degree of uncertainty. However, teachers who earn very high value-added scores early in their career rarely go on to earn low scores later, and vice versa. ³ No single measure of performance is reliable in isolation, but value-added provides objective information to support or act as a check against classroom observations.
“There’s no research behind value-added.”	Value-added is the product of nearly three decades of research by leading academics and economists. Its use by school districts dates back to the early 1990s. ⁴ Many researchers have specifically endorsed including value-added in teacher evaluations. For example, six leading experts from Stanford, Dartmouth and the University of Chicago wrote last year that “value-added has an important role to play in teacher evaluation systems.” ⁵
“Using value-added means that teachers will be evaluated based solely on standardized test scores.”	Evaluations that include value-added also use other measures of teacher performance, such as classroom observations. Like a baseball player’s batting average, value-added is a telling detail, but it doesn’t tell the whole story—no single measure can. That’s why no states or school districts evaluate teachers based solely on value-added scores. ⁶ Every evaluation system that includes value-added also uses other measures.
“Value-added is useless because it’s imperfect—it has a margin of error.”	Measures of teacher performance don’t have to be perfect to be useful. No measure of teacher performance is perfect, and value-added is no exception. However, it provides crucial information on how well teachers are doing at their most important job: helping students learn. Used alongside classroom observations and other indicators, it can paint a much clearer picture of teacher performance than most current evaluation systems, which rate 99% of teachers “satisfactory” regardless of how much their students learn. ⁷

¹ Ballou, Sanders & Wright (2004). *Controlling for Student Background in Value-Added Assessment of Teachers*. Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics.
² Glazerman, Loeb, Goldhaber, et al. (2010). *Evaluating Teachers: The Important Role of Value-Added*. Brookings Institution.
³ McCaffrey, Sass, Lockwood & Mihaly (2009). *The Inter-Temporal Variability of Teacher Effect Estimates*. National Center on Performance Incentives.
⁴ Sanders & Horn (1998). *Research Findings from the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) Database: Implications for Educational Evaluation and Research*. Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education.
⁵ Glazerman, Loeb, Goldhaber, et al. (2010). *Evaluating Teachers: The Important Role of Value-Added*. Brookings Institution.
⁶ National Council on Teacher Quality (2010). *State of the States*.
⁷ Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern & Keeling (2009). *The Widget Effect*. The New Teacher Project.



4. ANTICIPATE AND ADDRESS RESISTANCE

"Much of the concern and cautions about the use of value-added have focused on the frequency of occurrence of false negatives, i.e., effective teachers who are identified as ineffective. But framing the problem in terms of false negatives places the focus almost entirely on the interests of the individual who is being evaluated rather than the students who are being served."

- Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings



4. ANTICIPATE AND ADDRESS RESISTANCE

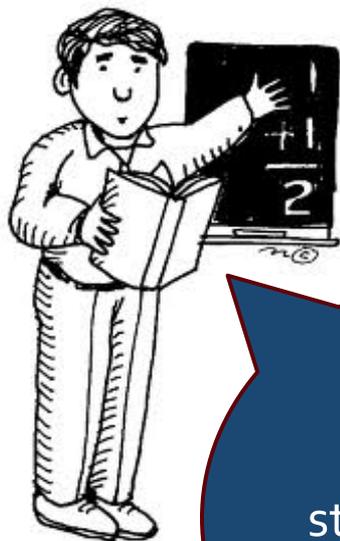
Compare ideals to reality:

In a <u>perfect</u> world...	In the <u>real</u> world...
All students would start the year on grade level	All students start the year at different places
All students would progress at the same pace	All students progress at their own pace
All students would have test data for each year/subject	Some students have missing test data
All students would perform at peak levels on test day	Many things affect a student's performance; some students underperform that day
Achievement tests would be perfect measures of student performance and would account for progress	Achievement tests measure absolute attainment at one point in time

Source: Houston Independent School District



5. PREPARE FOR QUESTIONS



Did my child make a year's worth of progress in a year? Is my child making progress toward state standards?



How can I be creative if student progress is based on test scores?



What percent of a teacher's evaluation will be based on VA scores? How will we evaluate teachers who don't have them?



QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION





MESSAGING EXERCISE

Work with a neighbor to develop clear and concise responses to this real-world value added measures scenario:

A State has been using value-added metrics to communicate about district and school results for two years. Next year, the stakes for individuals will increase significantly: for the first time, teachers will receive value-added scores, which will start to shape decisions about tenure, compensation and retention. What steps can the State take now to build understanding and support for these changes?

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CROSS-STATE PROBLEM SOLVING USING PROBLEMS OF PRACTICE



PROBLEM OF PRACTICE PROCESS

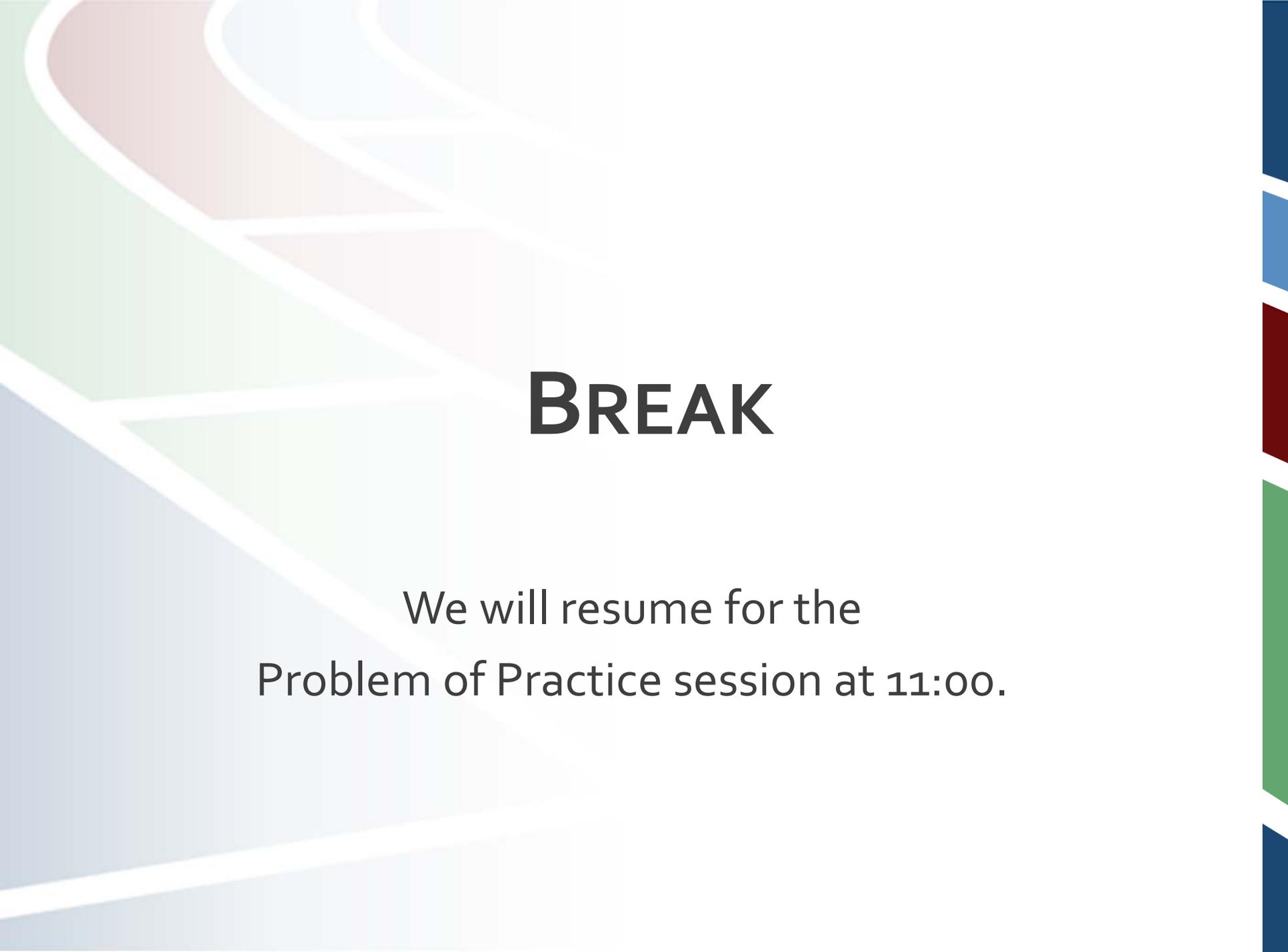
1. State 1 provides overview of the dilemma, and frames a question for the Consultancy group to consider.
2. Peer States ask clarifying questions.
3. Peer States ask probing questions.
4. Peer States discuss the dilemma and develop suggested solutions and strategies.
5. State 1 reflects on the discussion.

Time per State: approximately 50-75 minutes



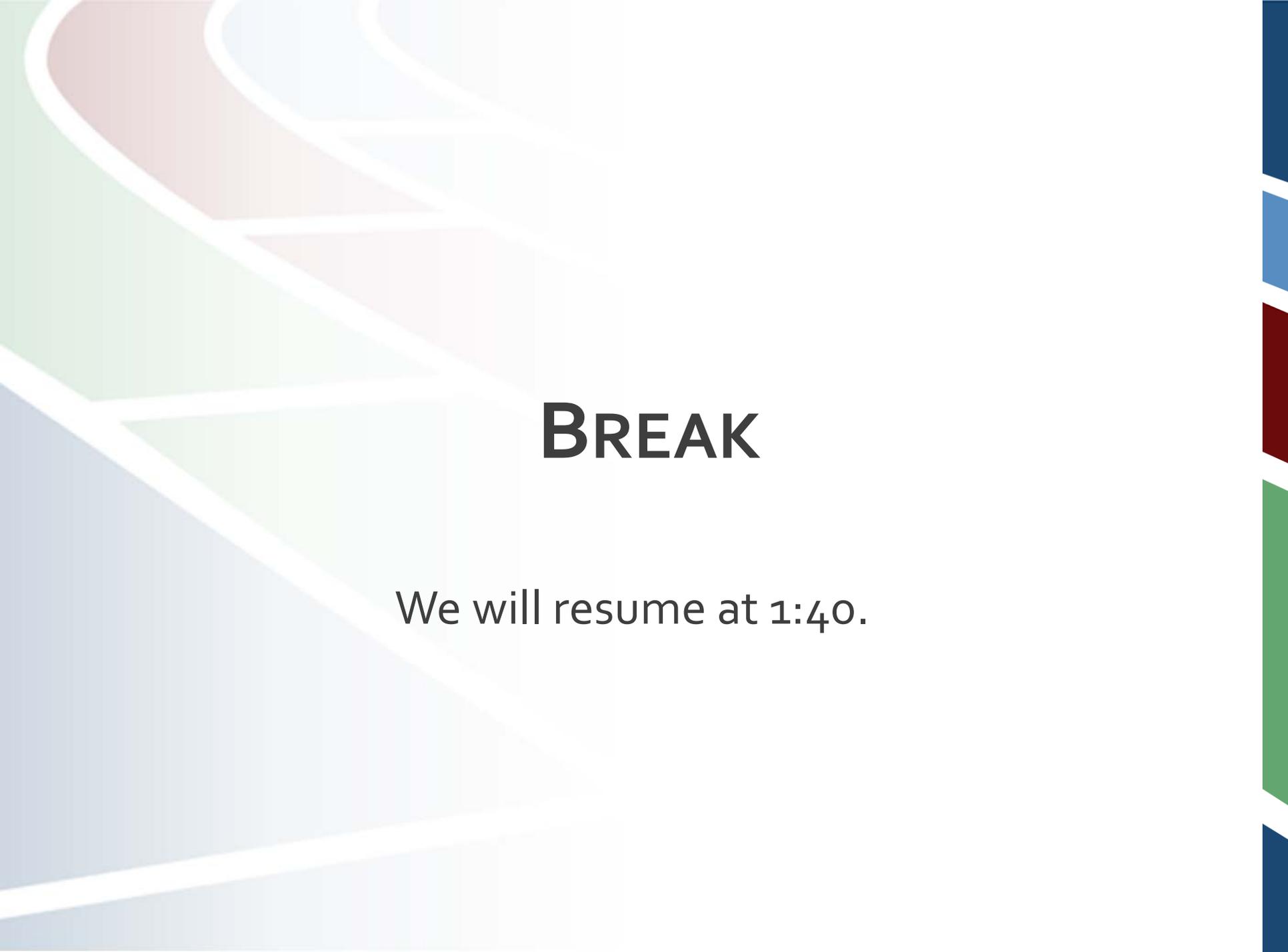
PROBLEM OF PRACTICE SPLIT

- 1. Communicating the “how” and “why” of evaluation: Delaware, Ohio and New York**
 - *Facilitated by Heidi Guarino*
- 2. Communicating about student growth measures: North Carolina and Rhode Island**
 - *Facilitated by John Luczak*



BREAK

We will resume for the
Problem of Practice session at 11:00.

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BREAK

We will resume at 1:40.



PROBLEM OF PRACTICE DEBRIEF

In **1-2 minutes**, tell us:

1. What was your Problem of Practice?
2. What strategies and/or solutions to your problem were discussed in your session?
3. As a result of this discussion, what are the **next 2-3 specific action steps** you plan to take to resolve your Problem of Practice?

GETTING INPUT AND FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS

Moderator:

Marciano Gutierrez, United States Department of Education

Panelists:

Celine Coggins, Teach Plus

David Keeling, TNTP

Peter Tang, Teach Plus



TEACHERS ON TEACHER EVALUATION

Teach Plus video:

- <http://www.teachplus.org/page/teachers-on-teacher-evaluation-162.html>

Teacher engagement is about
building trust.

Trust demands **transparency, openness
and honesty.**

Teachers want to see that you are
listening and that they are **being heard.**



TEACHER ENGAGEMENT: WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Hold realistic expectations	Evaluation reform is far down the list of most teachers' concerns. Focus on communicating clear, consistent information and reducing skepticism.
Don't ask for feedback if you're not ready to use it	Requests for feedback/input must be genuine and legitimate. Always plan to explain what you learned and how it shaped decisions.
Focus on school leaders	Teachers' views will be informed mainly by interactions with their own principals. Do everything you can to set school leaders up for success.
Make engagement visible	Highlight and thank teachers and leaders who provide feedback or are part of pilot efforts. Publicize changes based on their input.
Walk the talk	Demonstrate personal interest in teachers and school leaders' opinions and perspectives. Visit schools and have one-on-one conversations.
Find good stories	Anecdotes that illustrate that the new system is working well (if not perfectly) for teachers and schools can be powerful tools.



WHAT YOU NEED: BASICS



Clearly defined **goals** and parameters for engagement.



A **staff member** dedicated to coordinating outreach and communications.



Template materials for district leaders, principals and teachers.



A **website** for resources, FAQs, updates, success stories, etc.



An **email list** you can grow over time.



A **system for soliciting and responding** to ideas, questions and concerns.



CASE STUDY: HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT CAMPUS REPRESENTATIVES

“I don’t really read the emails I get from the district. I figure that if it’s important, my principal or someone else on campus will forward it to me.”

- HISD Teacher

CHALLENGE

Keeping 11,000+ full-time teachers informed about Houston’s Effective Teachers Initiative and new appraisal and development system.

SOLUTION

Campus Representatives: Designated communications point people (typically teachers) at each school who are responsible for distributing important resources and announcements about Effective Teaching Initiative-related priorities to their colleagues.

- Trusted staff member selected by principal
- Clearly defined (and limited) responsibilities
- In-person information/training sessions 3x/year
- Biweekly email updates with resources and reminders
- Guaranteed 24-hour turnaround for answers to questions



CASE STUDY: WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND PRINCIPAL SUPPORT

“Each piece was broken down into manageable segments. Whenever I needed help or clarification regarding any issues having to do with the evaluation, it was readily available.”

- End-of-Year Survey Remarks from a WPS Principal

CHALLENGE

Preparing Warwick principals to pilot Rhode Island’s new evaluation system and effectively communicate with teachers.

SOLUTION

Ongoing Communications Training and Support: Train Warwick principals how to effectively communicate with teachers about the new evaluation process and provide regular updates and resources to help them stay on track.

- Introductory training on communicating about big-picture goals and evaluation process.
- “Meetings in a Box” to encourage consistent messaging and facilitate communication with teachers.
- Weekly emails with action items, deadlines, tips and FAQs.
- Dedicated email address for questions.
- Practice-based trainings on conducting post-observation conferences, facilitating meetings and responding to concerns.



TEACH PLUS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Teach Plus is to **improve the achievement of urban children** by ensuring that a greater proportion of students have **access to excellent, experienced teachers**.

Teach Plus runs three programs designed to **place teacher leaders at the center of reform**:

- Teaching Policy Fellowship
- T+ Network
- T₃: Turnaround Teacher Teams

Our programs focus on **demonstrably effective teachers** in the second stage of their careers (in most cases, Years 3 through 10) who want to continue classroom teaching, while also expanding their impact as leaders in their schools and in State and district policy.



OUR WORK ON EVALUATION

Engaging a broad base of teachers for data-driven decision making

- Events with policy leaders and teachers
 - Use of audience response technology
- Surveys

Training teachers as leaders and spokespersons

- Teacher Ambassadors
 - Formally responsible for evaluation roll out
- Teaching Policy Fellows
 - Publish op-eds
 - Deliver testimony
 - Serve on evaluation design committees
 - Publish policy briefs



ENGAGING A BROAD TEACHER BASE

Typical first conversation with a State:

We want to engage teachers in the roll out of a new evaluation system.

We want you to help us tell teachers what's going to happen and then find a few who will say publically that they love it.

Tell me what you mean by that.



ENGAGING A BROAD TEACHER BASE

A Tale of Two State Engagement Plans:

	State A	State B
Meeting leader	State Commissioner plus two Deputies	Member of State Evaluation Reform Task Force
Consistency across meetings	Same leaders each time	Different leaders each time
Sample question proposed by DOE staff	Should student feedback be a part of a teacher's evaluation?	Do you feel like teaching is a profession?
Percentage of questions leader could answer from teachers	More than 75%	Fewer than 25%
Evidence that teacher voice was acted on	Strong	Moderate



ENGAGING A BROAD TEACHER BASE

Lessons on Process

- **First, do no harm.** Teachers most often start out feeling disrespected by the new system. Even well-intentioned engagement efforts can make that worse.
- **Analyze the current system.** Which States have the regulatory flexibility and political will to make changes based on teacher input?
- **Ask “Real” questions of teachers.** Teachers show up with the hope of giving actionable data. Don’t waste their time.
- **Make concrete adjustments.**
- **Have a follow up communications plan.** Promote teacher ownership by clearly articulating how the system has been modified based on teacher feedback.



ENGAGING A BROAD TEACHER BASE

Lessons on Content

Generational differences play a role in appetite for evaluation reform. A recent Teach Plus survey of more than 1,000 teachers (half with more than 10 years experience , and half with less than 10 years experience) found:

- **71%** of teachers with less than 10 years experience and **41%** of teachers with more than 10 years experience agree student learning should be part of evaluations.
- **51%** of teachers with less than 10 years experience and **23%** of teachers with more than 10 years experience agree that student gains should account for 20% or more of evaluations.



TEACHERS AS SPOKESPEOPLE

- Teachers can be powerful messengers with other teachers, within their unions and to the media.
- Teachers want the space to support the overall goal of the system, but to also criticize the elements that aren't working.
- Communications by teachers or others to teachers should always start with the "WHY."
- Teachers need to learn about the details of the program and how to talk about the role of test data.
- Teachers need a formal process to give regular feedback to leaders and to see that changes are being made.
- Reform-minded teachers can be effective brokers when there is disagreement between union leaders and district officials, but the role carries risk.



CORE INFORMATION THAT TEACHERS NEED

- The basics of the system must be laid out in advance at the start of the school year.
- The student assessments that will be used must be identified in advance of the start of school.
- The assessments that will be used must include the student growth that occurs in that teachers' classroom.
- Evaluations and observations must be linked to meaningful professional development.
- Evaluators should be trained to ensure inter-rated reliability, and teachers should know how evaluators were selected.
- Teachers should know how evaluations will impact their careers.



GETTING IT RIGHT

The Case of Memphis City Schools

- Teacher-led decision making on key aspects of the system
 - Piloted three observation rubrics and allowed teachers to determine which to use
 - Allowed teachers to determine weighting of different pieces of evaluation system
- Well-trained teacher ambassadors
- Sustained teacher presence in media



QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION





UPDATE ON DATA ANALYTICS SUBCOMMITTEE

John Luczak, Reform Support Network



DATA ANALYTICS SUBCOMMITTEE

Initial areas of focus:

- What evaluation data should be collected at the State level?
- How can State educational agencies and local educational agencies work together to best collect and analyze evaluation data?
- What data analytics are needed to make strategic evaluation and human capital decisions?

National experts:

- Jon Fullerton and/or Sarah Glover from the Strategic Data Project at Harvard
- Larry Stanton
- Corey Chatis



POSSIBLE DATA ANALYTICS DELIVERABLES

- **Feedback and support on pressing state-specific evaluation data needs** – states take turns sharing data challenges with full group
- **Development of a shared evaluation data analytics framework** – develop a shared set of research questions first and use them to create a prototype of a model data dashboard
- **Best practice research on evaluation data analytics** – pull together best practices in data analytics from leading states/districts



FINAL THOUGHTS

- What were your key takeaways from today?
- How will you use what we discussed today in your State?
- How can we improve this workgroup to better support your work?
- What additional resources will be helpful?

Thank You

***Don't forget to fill out the
survey forms before you leave***